

a nationwide fundraising effort to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

In the days ahead, the former Presidents will ask Americans to open their hearts and their wallets to help those in need. And they're going to talk to large corporations and small businesses and individual citizens across the Nation. The contributions will benefit the relief organizations that are doing vital work on the ground. We're going to take a look and make sure that the money raised is money needed. Right now if our fellow citizens want to help, they ought to give a cash donation to the Red Cross, which they can find at phone number 1-800-HELP-NOW.

I was so proud of the efforts that President Clinton and President Bush did to help the victims of the tsunami relief. Our country marveled at their capacity to rally our citizens and to work together. And once again, I've asked them to work to help the needs of those who hurt. And once again, I'm confident that the American people will respond.

I know this is an agonizing time, or we all know this is an agonizing time for the people of the Gulf Coast. I ask their continued patience as recovery operations unfold. I can assure them that the thoughts and prayers of the entire Nation are with them and their loved ones. I'm also confident that when it's all said and done, the efforts to rebuild the great city of New Orleans and to rebuild those communities in Mississippi and to help the folks in Alabama will make this Nation a stronger place.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau.

Memorandum on Assistance to Federal Employees Affected by Hurricane Katrina

September 1, 2005

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Assistance to Federal Employees Affected by Hurricane Katrina

I have directed the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish an emergency leave transfer program to assist employees affected by Hurricane Katrina. The emergency leave transfer program will permit employees in an executive agency to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies who have been adversely affected by Hurricane Katrina and who need additional time off from work without having to use their own paid leave.

George W. Bush

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Supplemental Appropriation for Response and Recovery Efforts in Areas Struck by Hurricane Katrina

September 1, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As I informed the Nation yesterday, we are dealing with one of the worst natural disasters in our country's history. Residents of the Gulf Coast States affected by the hurricane have lost loved ones, have lost homes, and have been displaced from their communities. My Administration is committed to ensuring that they will have the full support of the Federal Government.

Due to the catastrophic nature of Hurricane Katrina, I am asking the Congress to consider expeditiously the enclosed request, totaling \$10.5 billion, for an emergency FY 2005 supplemental appropriation for the Departments of Homeland Security and Defense. These funds will ensure that Federal response and recovery efforts continue uninterrupted.

I hereby designate this proposal in the amount requested herein as an emergency

requirement. This request responds to urgent needs associated with immediate response and recovery efforts associated with Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, and other affected areas.

The enclosed request requires immediate action by the Congress to ensure that the Federal response to this disaster continues uninterrupted. I anticipate making a further request in the coming weeks that will provide for a comprehensive response and recovery effort after fully assessing the impact of the hurricane. The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

Remarks on Departure for a Tour of Gulf Coast Areas Damaged by Hurricane Katrina

September 2, 2005

Secretary Chertoff and I just finished a meeting with Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, other members of my Cabinet, as well as General Honore, Admiral Keating, who is in charge of NORTHCOM—General Honore is our active duty general on the ground in Louisiana as well—and Mike Brown, who is the head of FEMA.

There's a lot of aid surging toward those who have been affected, millions of gallons of water, millions of tons of food. We're making progress about pulling people out of the Superdome. There's an issue right now at the convention center of New Orleans that General Honore briefed us on. We're trying to get food and medicine to the convention center. He's working with the Governor and the adjutant general and the mayor to deploy 600 of the newly arrived MPs to secure the site, so that the food and medicine and water can get in there.

A lot of people are working hard to help those who've been affected, and I want to thank the people for their efforts. The results are not acceptable. I'm headed down there right now. I'm looking forward to talking to the people on the ground. I want to assure the people of the affected areas and this country that we'll deploy the assets necessary

to get the situation under control, to get the help to the people who've been affected, and that we're beginning long-term planning to help those who have been displaced, as well as long-term planning to help rebuild the communities that have been affected.

I'm looking forward to my trip down there and looking forward to thanking those on the ground and looking forward to assure people that we'll get on top of this situation, and we're going to help people who need help.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:02 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army; Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, Adjutant General for Louisiana; and Mayor Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA.

Remarks on the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in Mobile, Alabama

September 2, 2005

The President. Well, first I want to say a few things. I am incredibly proud of our Coast Guard. We have got courageous people risking their lives to save life. And I want to thank the commanders, and I want to thank the troops over there for representing the best of America.

I want to congratulate the Governors for being leaders. You didn't ask for this when you swore in, but you're doing a heck of a job. And the Federal Government's job is big, and it's massive, and we're going to do it. Where it's not working right, we're going to make it right. Where it is working right, we're going to duplicate it elsewhere. We have a responsibility at the Federal level to help save life, and that's the primary focus right now. Every life is precious, and so we're going to spend a lot of time saving lives, whether it be in New Orleans or on the coast of Mississippi.

We have a responsibility to help clean up this mess, and I want to thank the Congress for acting as quickly as you did. Step one is to appropriate \$10.5 billion. But I've got to warn everybody, that's just the beginning.